

Talking Points

Pseudoephedrine legislation

1:45 p.m., Tuesday, January 26, 2010

For the first time in the history of Mississippi drug enforcement, the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics has seen methamphetamine arrests exceed cocaine arrests for the calendar year.

This is proof that methamphetamine production and use has reached epidemic proportions.

In 2009, there were 608 arrests for cocaine (powder and crack) and 981 arrests for methamphetamine, with 506 meth labs seized in Mississippi.

In 2008, the state had 834 cocaine arrests and 637 meth arrests, with 300 labs seized.

Marshall Fisher, MBN director, says crystal methamphetamine is the single largest threat to public safety and public health in Mississippi

We believe at least part of the answer to this threat is to put Mississippi "on schedule" to eliminate meth by making it more difficult for meth producers to get the main ingredient needed to "cook" the drug.

In 2006, the state of Oregon made pseudoephedrine a Schedule III drug, and since then Oregon's lab seizures have plummeted by 96%.

Sheriffs, policies chiefs, many social workers and others from across Mississippi believe scheduling pseudoephedrine here would have the same effect.

Legislation - House Bill 512 and Senate Bill 2339 - among others, are being considered in this legislative session to schedule pseudoephedrine.

I especially want to recognize Rep. Ed Blackmon and Sen. Sid Albritton for bringing these bills forward. And, I thank these law enforcement officials and their colleagues who work on the front lines every day, and I join them in endorsing this significant legislation to help solve a pressing problem.